

# Note-Taking Outline



## WHY TAKE NOTES?

The main difficulty that many students have in taking notes is that they are not really sure what they are trying to accomplish. Some students try to copy down every word. Others may only write down a fact here and there without including any ideas that explain them.

**THE PURPOSE OF TAKING NOTES IS TO HELP YOU LEARN!** Your notes help you to learn when you first write them down: taking notes helps you to figure out what's important in what you are reading and hearing. Also, taking notes gives you a record of what you need to know for the future. You can use your notes to study for exams.

## OUTLINING

An outline is a way of organizing and listing information. To make an outline, you first decide what the main ideas are. Then, below each main idea you list the various ideas and information that relate to the main idea.



## HOW TO OUTLINE WRITTEN INFORMATION

1. First, read the whole section or paragraph
2. Decide what the main idea is: write down the main idea in your own words. Use Roman numerals to indicate main ideas (Look at the outline form below to see how this is done.)
3. Then decide what ideas or details are details.
4. If you need to list information under the items indicated by capital letters, use numbers. (Look below to see how this is done.)

## OUTLINE FORM

### I. Main Idea

A. Idea/Detail

B. Idea/Detail

1. Sub-detail

2. Sub-detail

### II. Main Idea

A. Idea/Detail

B. Idea/Detail

1. Sub-detail

2. Sub-detail

## TIPS FOR TAKING NOTES

1. Always write your notes in your own words (unless you are copying a quotation.) Putting ideas and information into your own words help you to learn it.
2. Just try to get the main ideas and important facts down on paper.
3. Try to spend 80-90% of your time reading or listening and only 10-20% of your time writing.
4. Write your notes and phrases: don't bother to use complete sentences. **YOUR NOTES ARE FOR YOU.** Write them down in the quickest way that makes sense for you.